

Thousands Flee as Life Paralyzed in Kunduz City

KUNDUZ CITY - The Taliban attack on Kunduz City, the capital of northern Kunduz province, and the ensuing gunbattle have destroyed all systems people need. Since the Taliban took control of the city late on Monday, electricity has been cut off, water supply and communications systems have been disrupted and all schools closed. Taliban militants patrol the streets of Kunduz City in vehicles and on foot and residents have shut their houses' doors. All markets are closed and there has been no trade activity. Residents say the power transmission line was destroyed by the Taliban soon after



They entered the city. Sifatullah, who lives in Imam Sahib Bandar area, told Pajhwok Afghan News gunbattle started at midnight (the night between Sunday and Monday) and the clashes slowly spread to the heart of the city. "It was Monday afternoon when the Taliban entered... (More on P4)... (18)

30 Bodies, 200 Injured Brought to Kunduz Hospital

KABUL - Public Health Minister Dr. Ferozuddin Feroz on Wednesday said 30 dead bodies and 200 injured people had been delivered at the zonal hospital in the capital of northern Kunduz province.



Hundreds of Taliban gunmen using heavy and light weapons stormed Kunduz City from various directions and captured the strategic city after a few hours of clashes with security forces three nights ago. Feroz told reporters in Kabul most of the dead and

wounded brought to the civil hospital in Kunduz City were civilians. However, he said exact figures for casualties in clashes in Kunduz City remained unknown and the clashes were still ongoing. The United Nations Mission in Afghanistan

(UNAMA) in a statement on Wednesday said about 100 civilians had suffered casualties, expressing concern over the situation. Some sources put the number of casualties suffered by the Taliban at 160, but the rebels had rejected the figures. (Pajhwok)

Afghan Army to Crush Taliban in Kunduz: Former Envoy

TEHRAN - Nassir Ahmadpour, former Afghanistan's ambassador to Tehran, announced that his country's army will crush the Taliban militants in the Northern city of Kunduz in fresh operations. "Taliban intends to topple the Afghan government and the army is suppressing them in Kunduz for the same reason," Ahmadpour told FNA on Wednesday. He underlined that whatever is going on in Afghanistan is the result of several decades of operations by the Taliban and Al-Qaeda forces there. Ahmadpour

pointed to the presence of US military forces in Afghanistan and their withdrawal from there many years ago, and said, "The extremist and Takfiri forces on the assumption that Afghanistan's security forces are weak intended to topple the Afghan government or occupy vast areas of the country and they also did their best in this regard." The former Afghan ambassador pointed to the presence of the Taliban forces in Kunduz city and occupation of a number of districts, and said, "The

Afghan government forces pounded the Taliban forces in a series of operations and they took back certain areas; we hope that Kunduz will be purged of terrorists soon." On Tuesday, a senior Afghan legislator announced that the Afghan army was preparing to start a new round of large-scale operations on Wednesday to regain control of Kunduz from Taliban. "The Afghan forces' commanders will end their planning tonight and possibly, a massive counteroffensive... (More on P4)... (19)

Afghan Journalists Join the Refugee Stream to Europe

KABUL - An Afghan press watchdog says 23 Afghan media workers have embarked on a dangerous journey to Europe this week. Nai, a Kabul-based organization that advocates for open media in Afghanistan, says the journalists left their country because of "rising insecurity, censorship, and an uncertain future." In a statement on September 14, Nai said the media workers, most of whom worked as camera crew for various television stations in Kabul, left the Afghan capital as a single group on September 13. One of the journalists who asked not to be identified told Nai that "the worsening security situation, little job security, no clarity about the future and censorship imposed on the media" led him to choose the risky journey over continuing to work in Kabul. In a recent survey of 335 journalists across Afghanistan, Nai found that censorship is on the rise in the country's mushrooming media. Nai Chief Executive Mujib Khilwatgar says a majority of journalists in the country feel they are being censored. "Seventy-two percent [of journalists surveyed] say the government of Afghanistan is imposing censorship on them," Khilwatgar told journalists in Kabul on September 14. "Regional strongmen also impose restrictions on the press. Editors take third place in enforcing censorship, while the Taliban is the fourth." Nai says some of the worst censorship is being imposed in the most insecure provinces where government troops often battle the insurgents. The Afghan government, however, disputes Nai's findings. Haroon Hakimi, a spokesman for the Information and Culture Ministry, says Kabul supports press freedom. He says government interventions are aimed at preventing sensitive information from being leaked because it could compromise the country's national interests. "We have always tried to protect freedom of speech, but sometimes we censor reports by journalists that might undermine our society," he told Radio Free Afghanistan. "These include official secrets and issues that might damage our national security." Late last month, global media watchdog Reporters Without Borders condemned the interrogation of at least six Afghan journalists by the country's spy service, the National Department of Security. "We call on President Ashraf Ghani and Chief Executive Officer Abdullah Abdullah to... (More on P4)... (20)

Taliban's Shadow Governor Among Several Militants Killed

KUNDUZ CITY - The National Directorate of Security (NDS) on Wednesday said Taliban's shadow governor had been eliminated along with 14 rebels during an operation in Kunduz City -- a claim rejected by militants. Three days ago, the insurgents attacked the provincial capital from several directions and took control of the entire city after a 14-hour battle with security forces. A statement from NDS said Taliban's shadow governor Maulvi Salam, his deputy Zabihullah and Haris -- the head of Lashkar-i-Taiba -- were among those killed dur-

ing the operation. Salam and his accomplices, who were heading to Kunduz airport, were targeted by Afghan Air Force helicopters on Tuesday night, the spy service said in a statement. However, the Taliban rejected the NDS claim in a report on their website. The group's spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said he was in contact with Salam, who was well and alive. He promised an interview the leader would be posted to the Taliban website soon. Meanwhile, the militants stormed the main provincial airport with small and heavy weapons late

on Tuesday. Local officials said the assault was repulsed. US-led coalition forces also conducted their first airstrike on Taliban targets on the outskirts of Kunduz City in the morning. The Department of State said the militants had suffered heavy casualties. Some security officials said 160 militants had been killed in the battle for Kunduz City. But the rebel spokesman said Afghan forces suffered heavy casualties during clashes and the airport was currently under siege. The insurgent movement also claimed seizing eight... (More on P4)... (21)

8 Militants Killed in Zabul, Badghis Incidents

QALAT/QALA-I-NAW - At least five militants, including a commander, were killed in a coalition airstrike in southern Zabul province, while six rebels suffered casualties during a clash in northwestern Badghis province, officials said on Wednesday. Mohammadullah, the administrative chief for the Shah Joi district of Zabul, told Pajhwok Afghan News a foreign forces warplane struck a car carrying militants in Jafar area on Tuesday night. He said that Taliban commander Hamid Kaka and his four accomplices were killed in the strike. Meanwhile, a security of-



ficial said on condition of anonymity that an Afghan National Army (ANA) soldier was killed in a Taliban attack in the province. Elsewhere, three insurgents were killed and as many wounded during a clash in the Langar area of Qadas district in Badghis province. District chief Mirza Ali said the incident took place on Tuesday night when militants stormed a security post. He said security forces suffered no casualties during the clash. The Taliban have not yet commented on the incident. (Pajhwok)

5 Passengers Suffer Casualties in Wardak Road Mishap

MAIDAN SHAHR/TIRINKOT - Two people were killed and three others injured in a car accident on the Kabul-Ghazni highway in central Maidan Wardak province, an official said on Wednesday. Maidan Wardak governor's spokesman Attallah Khogyani told Pajhwok Afghan News the accident took place when the Corolla car crashed into a Mazda truck in Syedabad district on



Tuesday night. He said that two people were killed and three others -- two children and a woman -- injured. Khogyani added the wounded were in stable condition and the truck driver had been arrested. According... (More on P4)... (22)

Outlook Horoscope

Aries (Mar. 22-Apr.20)

You may be consciously holding yourself back because you know it's not quite time yet to break free from recently imposed routines. But you are eager for a change, nonetheless, and can't wait forever. It's no problem if you still lack specific plans since the details will fall into place over the next few days. Instead of initiating action today, just imagine what freedom will feel like once it's yours.

Taurus (Apr.21-May 20)

Although you are confident that your goals are obtainable, you still might be unclear where reality fades into fantasy. You may not even realize that you're dreaming of a future that is beyond your reach. Nevertheless, you can work toward making the most of what you already have by walking in two worlds. One foot is stepping into your dreams and the other is wide awake in the present.

Gemini (May 21-June 20)

You have an admirable-but-unrealistic desire to make everyone in your world happy today. You sincerely want to be of service to others, but you can't just drop your own issues in the process, especially if your intentions are at cross purposes with those around you. Unfortunately, compromise might not be a viable option at this time. Take care of your needs instead of worrying about pleasing the crowd.

Cancer (June 21-July 20)

You're surfing emotional waves that are bigger than you've seen in a while and they propel you further than you expect. You're likely to take your feelings seriously as you try to maintain your balance in very tricky circumstances. Nevertheless, the completion of any one specific task may be more elusive than you wish. You grow even more determined than ever to reach the finish line.

Leo (July 21-Aug. 21)

You are keen on keeping your current commitments but your instincts may be pulling you in an entirely different direction today. Your emotions are in flux, challenging you to stay in touch with your more radical feelings. On the outside, you have everything completely under control but you're working overtime to make it appear that way. Be gentle with yourself.

Virgo (Aug. 22-Sep 22)

You often seem as cool as a cucumber, but your rational side is nowhere to be found today. People may be disappointed if they believe they can rely on your logical approach to lead the way now. But analytical thinking isn't the only viable method for reaching a sensible conclusion. Sometimes, you must dance to the music you hear inside your head, no matter what others might say.

Libra (Sep 23-Oct. 22)

An action-packed day at work and home keeps you in perpetual motion, but it's even more hectic within the confines of your mind. But there's no need to hide your thoughts and feelings simply for the sake of convenience. Thankfully, the planets are pushing the energy up toward the surface so it can be expressed. It really doesn't serve any purpose at all to withhold your best ideas from the world.

Scorpio (Oct.23-Nov.22)

Even if you think you're fully aware of the emotional dynamics in your immediate environment, you still could be in for a surprise today. Although your romantic life may be very different from your expectations, rest assured this current detour isn't permanent. You are ready to react to the changing circumstances, but don't know which way to turn as your feelings build in intensity.

Sagittarius (Nov.23-Dec.20)

It is all too easy to slip into your inner world now without informing anyone of your whereabouts. But even if you don't say anything, someone might still notice your emotional detachment. Be careful about withdrawing too far because you could inadvertently precipitate the melodrama you're trying to avoid. Stopping long enough to consider the feelings of everyone else is the first step to opening up the lines of communication.

Capricorn (Dec.21-Jan19)

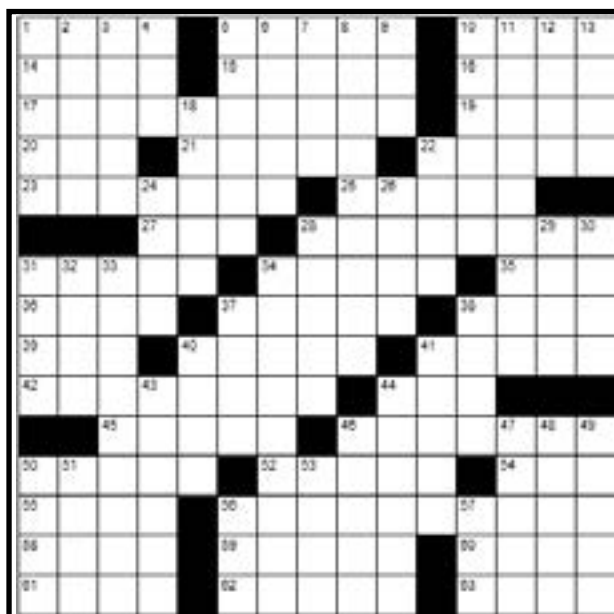
Your ability to visualize the future is one of your greatest assets now. You might even believe you can manifest your dreams, regardless of how many obstacles are in your path. Unfortunately, you have a slightly distorted view of your own capabilities today. Even if the burden of responsibility is on your shoulders, you probably have a few more days before you must make your move.

Aquarius (Jan 20-Feb.18)

You have strived for success long enough and now you want to see tangible results. Although your ideal payoff may still seem far off in the distance, practicing patience goes a long way to calm your nerves today. Uncharacteristic confusion can add discouragement to the picture, but it fades quickly once you stop trying so hard to prove your worth.

Pisces (Feb.19-Mar.20)

Conflicting cosmic messages ask you to focus your attention while simultaneously telling you to loosen your grip on the details. You are ready to jump into the fray yet your key planet Neptune makes it impossible to know what's most sensible in the moment. Considering the alternatives is a prudent course of action as long as you aren't seduced into believing you must choose one or the other today.



Across

1. Dad, 5. Ottoman title, 10. Prima donna problems, 14. A Freudian stage, 15. Ancient Hebrew vestment, 16. vera, 17. Treacherous, 19. Stare, 20. Antlered animal, 21. Flogs with a stick, 22. Birch relative, 23. Reposing, 25. Subsidized, 27. Altitude, 28. Sugars, 31. Complaining, 34. Patter, 35. Born as, 36. Telephoned, 37. Stave, 38. Used to be, 39. Fury, 40. An edict of the Russian tsar, 41. A radioactive gaseous element, 42. Television movie, 44. 52 in Roman numerals, 45. Positive pole, 46. Bearing, 50. Anagram of, 52. Unsophisticated, 54. Regulation, 55. Against, 56. Snakelike, 58. French for "Black", 59. Willow, 60. Picnic insects, 61. Small European freshwater fish, 62. Russian emperors,

Down

1. An essay, 2. Anoint (archaic), 3. Playgrounds, 4. Alien Life Form, 5. Scholarly person, 6. Mimicking, 7. Sneaker or pump, 8. Homemaker, 9. Commercials, 10. A young eagle, 11. Made joyful, 12. Exude, 13. Clairvoyant, 18. In a cold manner, 22. Cain's brother, 24. A tart spicy quality, 26. Meat from cows, 28. Muscle contraction, 29. Roman emperor, 30. Observed, 31. Court order, 32. Rabbit, 33. Inflexible, 34. Unoriginality, 37. Slip, 38. Pause, 40. Flying saucers, 41. Ascended, 43. Whole, 44. Admirers, 46. He plays the bagpipes, 47. Pee, 48. Leases, 49. Excrete, 50. Musical group, 51. Dwarf buffalo, 53. Operatic solo, 56. Drunkard, 57. Buff.

Yesterday's Solution



abrupt, appear, beauty, clashes, competition, complete, craze, crisp, decent, erase, glance, govern, grail, hilt, hockey, hormone, human, leash, legality, lessen, miracle, moment, mutt, near, nothing, protection, purse, real, river, sent, smooth,

